

Maurice Hinchey NEWS

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HINCHEY RESPONDS TO SUMMARY OF NAS STUDY

WASHINGTON – U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today issued a statement in response to the executive summary of a study conducted by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) titled *A Risk Management Strategy for PCB-Contaminated Sediments*. The study was commissioned by Congress in 1997. The executive summary has been released in advance of the full report, which is expected out within the next two months.

Hinchey offered the following comments:

"Those who sought to commission this report and to use it as a tool to further delay or to prevent the cleanup of PCBs from the Hudson must be very disappointed today. Its sponsors had hoped the NAS study would condemn the EPA's plan to remove PCBs from areas in which it is highly concentrated. It does not do this. In fact, the authors of the report state clearly that it would be inappropriate to recommend the best remediation option for a given site since that decision must be based on site-specific factors.

"What the report does say is that the presence of PCBs in sediments may pose long-term public health and ecosystem risks and that technologies like those proposed by the EPA may be effective for 'hot spot' remediation.

"Judging from the executive summary, there is nothing in the NAS report that should hinder the process that was set in motion when the EPA issued its proposal in December. The NAS has simply proposed general guidelines for the EPA to follow as it goes forward. These recommendations, such as considering the cultural and societal effect of the contamination and its remediation, and encouraging the active participation of all affected parties, are most welcome."

In 1997, Hinchey led the fight against the legislative rider sponsored by former Rep. Gerald Solomon, which required the NAS study. Hinchey argued that the NAS report was being used to further delay the cleanup of PCBs dumped by General Electric into the Hudson River over a period of thirty years. He subsequently thwarted attempts by GE to enact legislation that would have prevented the Environmental Protection Agency from releasing its cleanup proposal until after the release of the NAS report.